Bluegum eucalyptus

Eucalyptus globulus Labill.

Myrtle family (Myrtaceae)

Post-Cook introduction

One of the first eucalypts to be used extensively outside of Australia and perhaps the best known, particularly so in California, Spain, Portugal, and Argentina where it has been used both as a timber tree and an ornamental along city streets. Easily recognized by the very large white flowers single and almost stalkless at leaf bases, more than 2 inches (5 cm) across the very numerous spreading white stamens, and by the large four-angled warty seed capsules with whitish bloom. Crushed foliage has an odor like that of camphor.

A large tree in Hawaii 150–200 ft (46–61 m) high, with straight trunk 2–4 ft (0.6–1.2 m) in diameter and up to two-thirds of total height. Crown narrow and irregular, with drooping foliage. Bark smoothish, mottled gray, brown, and greenish, peeling in long strips, at base becoming gray, rough and shaggy, thick, and finely furrowed. Inner bark light yellow within thin green layer, fibrous, with slightly resinous or bitter taste. Twigs slender, angled, drooping, yellow green, turning dark red or brown.

Leaves alternate, with flattened yellowish leafstalks of ½–1½ inches (1.3–4 cm). Blades narrowly lanceshaped, 4–12 inches (10–30 cm) long and 1–2 inches (2.5–5 cm) wide, mostly curved, long-pointed at apex, shortpointed at base, dull green on both surfaces, thick and leathery, with fine straight side veins and vein inside margin, drooping. Juvenile leaves on four-angled or winged twigs, opposite for many pairs, stalkless or clasping, ovate or broadly lance-shaped, 3–6 inches (7.5–15 cm) long and 1½–3½ inches (4–9 cm) wide, with bluish or whitish waxy bloom on lower surface.

Flowers single, rarely 2–3, at leaf base on very short flattened stalk or none, more than 2 inches (5 cm) across the very numerous spreading white stamens about ½ inch (13 mm) long, with odor of camphor. Buds top-shaped, ½–⅝ inch (13–15 mm) long and ½–1 inch (13–25 mm) wide, four-angled and very warty, bluish with whitish bloom, lid caplike and warty with central knob or point, and thin smooth pointed outer lid.

Seed capsules broadly top-shaped and 4-angled, ⅜–⅝ inch (10–115 mm) long and ¾–1 inch (19-25 mm) wide, bluish with whitish bloom and with broad thick flat or convex disk extending over 3–5 blunt flat thick valves. Seeds many, irregularly elliptical, ⅛ inch (3 mm) long, dull black, also many smaller nonfunctional.

The sapwood is white and the heartwood pale yellow brown. Wood heavy (sp. gr. 0.75) with a medium texture, and straight to interlocked grain. Occasional trees produce wood with a bird's-eye figure. Dense outer wood of logs is very strong and moderately durable. The inner wood is of lower density and apt to be brash. Growth stress is not as serious a problem in manufacture as with *E. saligna* and *E. robusta* but is nevertheless troublesome.

The wood is used in light and heavy construction. On Maui, the lumber has been used for home framing, flooring, and siding as well as for decorative interior panelling and furniture. Although it is a difficult wood to work and has a large movement in place with humidity changes, is being used for normal hardwood purposes. A veneer plant in Hawaii successfully peeled bluegum and laid up plywood used for concrete forms. The most recent use of bluegum in Hawaii was for pulpwood chips, which were exported to Japan.

Plantations of this species are an important source of fuelwood in places such as the Andes where fuel is scarce. Trees grow very rapidly and after cutting form new trunks from stump sprouts. A large program of producing' "biornass" by planting *E. globulus* and *E. saligna* for fuelwood as an alternate energy source is being investigated in Hawaii. The tree is a honey plant and is also used in windbreaks.

An essential oil named eucalyptol is distilled from the leaves and has medicinal use. This is the principal eucalyptus for oil. Leaf infusions have served elsewhere in home remedies.

Introduced to Hawaii in the 1870s or 1880s, this eucalypt was extensively planted between 1908 and 1920 on Haleakala Ranch on Maui, and on Kukaiau Ranch, Parker Ranch, and Kapapala Ranch on Hawaii. Until heavy logging began on Hawaii in 1973 to supply the chip market, there were 56 million board feet of timber on Hawaii. Maui has about 100 million feet. It was the fourth highest in timber volume of the tree species in Hawaii. Since 1973, about 40 million board feet have been cut on Hawaii and the stands cut are now growing as coppice. The coppice stands should be cut again when about 15 years old. This eucalypt has been planted on all the larger islands.

This is the common *Eucalyptus* of California. It is

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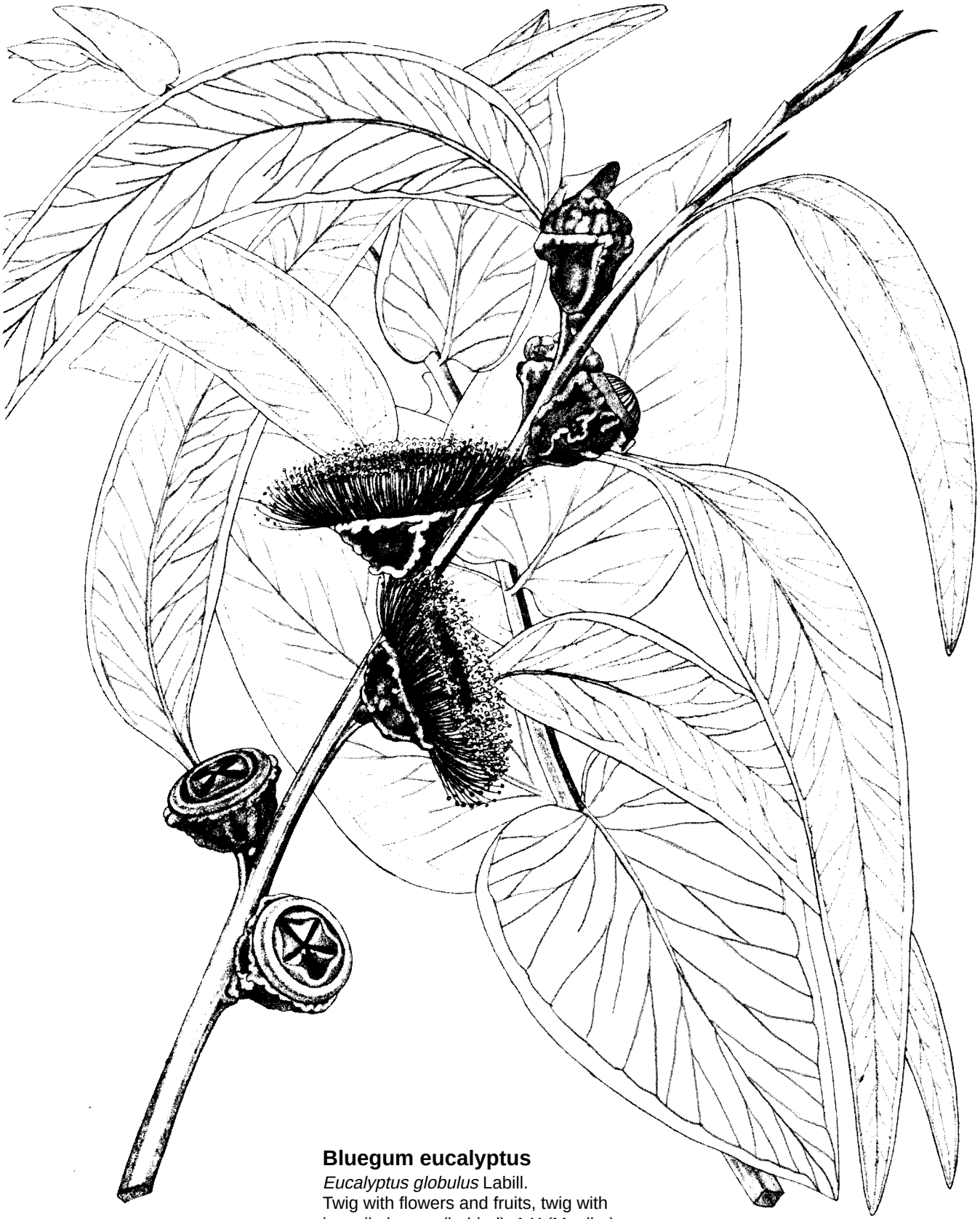

Bluegum eucalyptus
Eucalyptus globulus Labill.
Twig with flowers and fruits, twig with juvenile leaves (behind), 1 X (Mueller).

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one of the most extensively planted eucalypts outside of Australia for forestry, shade, and ornament. It has been successful in different climates mainly subtropical or sometimes classed as warm temperature. Hybrids have originated in plantations elsewhere.

Special areas
Tantalus, Volcanoes

Champion
Height 90 ft (27.4 m), c.b.h. 26.7 ft (8.1 m), spread 96 ft (29.3 m). Kukaiau Ranch, Honokaa, Hawaii (1968).

Range
Eastern Tasmania and very local in southern Victoria, and New South Wales, Australia. In pure stands on favorable sites or mixed with other eucalypts. Mediterranean or Atlantic climate.

Other common names
southern bluegum, bluegum, Tasmanian bluegum (Australia); Tasmanian blue eucalyptus

The specific name meaning little ball refers to the appearance of the flower from a distance. This species is the floral emblem of Tasmania and has nearly all its natural range within that island.

Eucalyptus globulus Labill. is now designated also as *Eucalyptus globulus* Labill. subsp. *globulus*. Two other subspecies *E. globulus* subsp. *bicostata* (formerly considered two species, *E. bicostata* and *E. stjohnii)* and *E. globulus* subsp. *maidenii* (F. Muell.) Kirkp. (formerly considered *E. maidenii)* are not described here (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations 1979).

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